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ABSTRACT

An English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) educator of migrant students in a rural county in Oregon used a whole-language approach to language and reading instruction. Although reading instruction in Spanish was preferred, lack of Spanish-speaking personnel and limited ESL instructional time prohibited that approach. In whole-language ESL, the teacher exposes students to interesting books, language experience activities, and field trips to spark student interest and curiosity. Language acquisition, as opposed to language learning, is an almost unconscious effort growing from the desire to understand something of interest. All types of language experience activities are conducive to language acquisition. Students create personal dictionaries of words they are learning and add pictures cut from magazines. Wordless books offer pictorial stories for discussion and writing of the story. The created stories are meaningful because the students create the story in their own vocabulary. Easy-reader Spanish-language books help students retain their home-language skills. In the classroom it is important to let students know that practice in speaking and reading Spanish will also improve their English. English books for primary ESL students must be easy, somewhat predictable, and ridiculous. This paper contains an extensive list of wordless books. (KS)

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Whole Language ESL:Reading ,Writing, and Speaking

I have worked with ESL students for many years and I want to share an empirical sketch of my work with Hispanic students for the past six years in the Migrant Program of Clackamas County. My intention for this article is to encourage districts and schools where an ESL program may be just beginning for multilingual/multicultural students.

Such was our situation in 1986 in Clackamas County when I began working with the migrant education program there. I was resource teacher and home/school liaison for migrant education. During that first year I went to ten schools per week to work with children, and after school I tried to keep up with family contacts and certificates of eligibility for new comers. There was no time during the week to do any planing, preparation or gathering of materials. Therefore, Saturdays became just another work day.

We were aware that it would be more beneficial for our primary students to learn to read in Spanish, their home language. Research tells us that a child can learn to read with greater ease and more confidence in the home language first. But we just didn't have the personnel for this luxury. Our county had fewer than a hundred Hispanic students spread out over an area of 18 thousand square miles in about fifteen school districts.. Even though the county to the south of us had had a large population of Hispanics of which many were migrant, we had not felt such an impact yet. Consequently we had few if any trained school personnel who could communicate with students who only spoke Spanish. In some cases we found that students just stayed out of school because there was no one in small school districts who could help them register.

We knew our primary Hispanic students were developmentally ready to begin with print, and, even though I could teach them to read in Spanish, that could only happen once or twice a week for a half hour to forty -five minutes. The rest of the time they would be seeing and hearing a teacher with English speaking students, and she would be teaching them to read English. We decided to go with the English purely from a standpoint of necessity because of our dearth of Spanish speaking personnel.

Throughout the county teachers were being encouraged to use the

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Whole Language method for reading instruction for all students. The Idea of whole language reading places an emphasis on starting the students with whole pieces of literature rather than starting with the little pieces of phonemes and phonics to build up to a word, then a sentence, then a paragraph. We read something in its entirety or at least a complete unit to the child. We also put the child's own words on paper and read the whole piece back to him. We answer questions about sounds and letters only when the child starts to ask about them. We **do not** force feed or spoon feed little bits to him/her until he/she asks. Using whole pieces of literature or chunks of language is called the top down approach, whereas starting with phonemes, little pieces, and building up is called the bottom up approach.

Whole language ESL, has the same idea behind it. We do not pick out sounds or even words for the student to learn. We start with interesting books, languages experience activities, field trips, etc. But this arouses a big question. Where do you get the ideas and materials for such classes? Fortunately there is much more ESL material on the market now than there was in the mid eighties. One that I've found recently is Let's Learn English Second Language Activities for the Primary Grades by G. Yvonne Perez, Idolina G Vela and Carroll Frankenberger and published by Scott, Foresman and Company. It has the kinds of activities and the variety to give the teacher ideas that can be adapted for specific and unique classroom situations.

Some of the best materials for your students will be student made. That's because your students know what they don't know and what they want to know. As stated earlier, we **do not** want to just start putting word lists up that the students should know. They have to have curiosity as the instigator for what they desire to learn. One of the ways to get this desire to glow is by reading to them. Later I'll give our findings on helpful choices of reading materials for primary ESL students. Another way to get curiosity stirred up is field trips. I suggest field trips around and in the buildings, the playground, into all the offices: principal's, nurse's, etc. .

Krashen, one of the ESL experts, tells us that language can be acquired only when there is meaningful input. Krashen says that language learning is different from language acquisition in this way: When we purposefully learn a language, we are trying to learn the rules of grammar, new vocabulary, etc. ; In actually acquiring a language we do not focus on the language so much as getting and giving meaning to something that interests us or someone near us. Formal language learning is learning the grammar rules and assigned vocabulary. It's a conscious effort. Language

acquisition is another thing altogether. It's doing something in a milieu where that language keeps getting poured in as we're doing something that interests us. Also a need to respond in that language is created. Field trips are good for pouring in English because there is a need to know the names of these places. The student would probably foresee the need to go to one of these places in the future and he'll/she'll need to know what to call it. Language acquisition is more of an unconscious effort growing out of need plus desire. It could be compared to eating for fulfilling your vitamin requirement as opposed to eating because you're hungry. I suppose some people look at carrots and think, "My body needs some vitamin 'A', therefore I shall eat these carrots." But, more likely when we see some carrots we notice their nice, bright, orange color. Then we just pick one up and start munching. We would like for English to be like this for the student. We want to make it appealing just like a bright, crunchy carrot.

All types of language experience activities are really wonderful for language acquisition, and helps create meaningful input for the student. One very thorough Language Experience Approach(LEA) description is from Teacher Resource Guide by Else Hamayan and Margo Pfleger. It's from the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). The Complete title is, "Developing Literacy in English as a Second Language:Guidelines for Teachers of Young Children from Non-Literate Backgrounds."

Students need to start with whatever is closest to them and work outward. That means they'll be starting with desk, pencil, teacher, paper etc.. Student dictionaries are the best place to make a collection of these words. In the primary grades loads of magazines and catalogs of all types are needed for the students to cut up and paste beside the word they want in their personal dictionary. We had more success with students put at least one to five words a day in their dictionary. Some students go overboard, but that didn't appear to be harmful. They slowed down after a while. Students who read in their home language won't need pictures from magazines unless they choose to get elaborate with their dictionary. Reviewing the new words in student dictionaries with them about once a week will help them remember why they wanted to know the word and allow a concept check for the teacher. Student dictionaries are a good example of student made materials for an ESL classroom and they can be quite valuable.

One of the easiest Language Experience Approach activities there is

can be done with wordless books. The students and teacher should go through the book several times together discussing what is happening and other interesting aspects of the book. It should be left out for the students to examine alone or with other students. If possible a check out system would allow the student to take the book home to use with a parent, also. And finally, having the students work in collaborative groups to write their own words to the book will give them a creation of their own. Supply them with a book, strips of paper, and paper clips. If they do not write yet, they will need help getting the words on paper. They will decide what they want the story to say on each page. They can make it as verbose or laconic as they choose. During the next few days after the students have written their books, all of them can be read to the class and some students may start sharing them with each other. An important idea behind wordless books that the students write is that it is definitely meaningful input since the students themselves created the story in their own vocabulary.

Another activity to follow with the students' creations is a matching-reading game for the students. This activity should come after several readings of the book. The student can be given sentence strips to match the words of the pages the students wrote. The students then work in groups to paper clip the new strips to the original ones. As soon as this becomes too easy, the strips can be cut into individual words. By the time students are able to match word for word, they are probably actually reading the word with understanding.

Some easy reader Spanish books for first ,second, and third grade students to allow them to look at or read the books in their spare time will keep them in touch with their home language in print even though the main idea is to teach them English. This is not just a way of pampering students; research supports the idea that students who keep reading and improving skills in the home language or at least have that language acknowledged as worthy, learn a second one more readily. In the booklet "How Children Learn a Second Language." Kenneth M. Johns says, "**If the child feels that, in learning English, his native language is somehow inferior or at least not as good, it is bound to affect his self-esteem. Teachers must make a special effort to let children know that their native language is important and that they must continue to use it even as they learn English. Children should be told that knowing how to speak two languages makes them 'special'".**
Another expert who confirms this is Jim Cummins:
"Educators who see their role as adding a second language and cultural affiliation to student's repertoire are likely to empower

students more than those who see their role as replacing or subtracting students' primary language and culture in the process of assimilating them to the dominant culture." In the classroom it is important to let students know that practice in speaking and reading Spanish will also improve their English.

The English books for primary ESL students must to be easy, somewhat predictable, and ridiculous. Yes, ridiculous! Primary level students love to hear predictable stories, rhymes, etc. They are also greatly attracted to the ridiculous. Another reason for the ridiculous is for a more rapid commitment to memory. Memory experts tell us that our mind will quickly trash a common idea or everyday scene, while it will cling to the ridiculous for years on end. Books with silly or obnoxious pictures and associations to attach to the English words will speed students along.

In taking a whole language approach it is important to remember that whatever book or topic the student is interested in will be good for him/her. The overprotective teacher can take relief that it's the student's interests that will motivate him/her to learn. If something really is too difficult, the student will give it up.

Summary

Students need meaningful input. For something to be meaningful the student must have curiosity about it. A teacher can arouse curiosity by reading developmentally appropriate literature to the student and by using language experience activities. Some of the best language experience activities are field trips, and planned high interest activities from academic content areas such as science, social studies, health, math, or physical education or activities unrelated to academic content areas. The student may put the "meaningful input" into student dictionaries and books the students writes.

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Wordless Book List

Author	Title
Alexander, Martha	Bobo's Dream
Anderson, Lena	Bunny bath Bunny surprise
Anno, Mitsumasa	Anno's Italy Anno's peekaboo Anno's journey Anno's U.S.A. Anno's flea market Anno's Britain Anno's counting house
Aruego, Jose	Look what I can do
Bang, Molly	The Gre[illegible]ady and the strawberry snatcher
Briggs, Raymond	The Snowman
Bonners, Susan	Just in passing
Browning, Robert	The Pied Piper of Hamlin
Bruna, Dick	Ji no nai ehon Another story to tell
Burton, Marilee	The elephant's nest
Butterworth, Ni	Amanda's butterfly
Carle, Eric	Do you want to be my friend?
Carroll, Ruth	The chimp and the clown Rolling downhill
Carrier, Lark	The snowy path: a Christmas journey
Chwast, Seymour	The alphabet parade
Collington, Peter	The angel and the soldier boy

Cristini, Erman	In my garden
Daughtry, Duann	What's inside
Day, Alexandra	Good dog, Carl Carl goes shopping Carl's afternoon in the park
De Groat, Diane	Alligator's toothache
Demarest, Chris	Orville's odyssey
DePaola, Tomie	The hunter and the animals Pancakes for breakfast Flicks Sing Pierrot, sing
Drescher, Henri	The yellow umbrella
Dubois, Claude	He's my Jumbo!
Dupasquier, Phil	The great escape
Emberley, Ed	A birthday wish
Endersby, Frank	What about me? The nuisance
Euvremer, Teryl	Sun's up
Feldman, Barbara	Stephen's frog
Felix, Monique	The story of a little mouse trapped
Fisher, Leonard	Sailboat lost
Florian, Douglas	The city
Fromm, Lilo	Muffel & Plums
Felix, Monique	The story of a little mouse trapped
Goodall, John S.	Creepy castle Paddy's new hat Paddy to the rescue Paddy Pork's holiday

	The story of a castle
	Jacko
	Paddy goes traveling
	Paddy underwater
	Paddy Pork: odd jobs
	The ballooning adventures of Paddy
	Little Red Riding Hood
	The surprise picnic
	Naughty Nancy
	Naughty Nancy goes to school
	Edwardian entertainments
Graham, Alastai	Full moon soup; or the fall of the Ho
Grimm, Jacob	Hansel and Gretel
Hartelius, Margaret A.	A Birthday Trombone
Henstra, Friso	Mighty mizzling mouse
Hill, Eric	At home
Hoban, Tana	Shapes and things
	Shapes, shapes, shapes
Hogrogian, Nonny	Apples
Hughes, Shirley	Up and up
Keats, Ezra Jack	Clementina's cactus
Koontz, Robin M.	Dinosaur dream
Krahn, Fernando	Little love story
	Robot-bot-bot
	Sebastian and the mushroom
	April fools
	The self-made snowman
	The secret in the dungeon
	The creepy thing
	Amamda and the mysterious carpet
	Who's seen the scissors?
	How Santa Claus had a long and difficult
	The mystery of the Giant's Footprints
Lindblom, Steve	Let's give Kitty a bath!
MacGregor, Mari	Baby takes a trip

Mari, Iela	The chicken and the egg
Mayer, Mercer	Frog goes to dinner Frog on his own One frog too many A boy, a dog, a frog and a friend Bubble Bubble The great cat chase Two moral tales Two more moral tales Ah-choo Hiccup Oops
McCully, Emily	First Snow Picnic School
McNaught, Harry	Trucks
Morris, Terry N.	Goodnight, dear monster
Nygren, Tord	The red thread
Oakely, Graham	Graham Oakley's magical changes
Ormerod, Jan	Moonlight Sunshine
Oxenbury, Helen	Shopping trip Beach day
Pearson, David	One rainy night* Una noche lluviosa* The house of mirrors* La casa de espejos* The park bench* La banca en el parque* The Umbrella* El Paraguas*
Pratter, John	The gift*
Peterson, John	Tulips
Richter, Mischa	Quack?

Rockwell, Anne	Albert B. Cub and zebra; an alphabet
Saltzberg, Barn	The yawn
Sasaki, Isao	Snow
Schubert, Diete	Where's my monkey
Shimin, Symeon	A special birthday
Sis, Peter	An ocean world
Spier, Peter	Rain
Tafuri, Nancy	Early morning in the barn Junglewalk Follow me! Rabit's morning Do not disturb
Tanaka, Hideyuk	The happy dog
Tanner, Jane	Niki's walk* El paseo de Niki*
Turk, Hanne	Robinson Max Chocolate Max
Turkle, Briton	Deep in the Forest
Ueno, Noriko	Elephant buttons
Vincent, Gabrie	Ernest and Celestine's patchwork quilt
Ward, Lynd	The silver pony
Wernhard, Herma	At the zoo On the road
Wezel, Peter	The good bird
Wiesner, David	Free fall
Winter, Paula	The bear and the fly Sir Andrew

Woolley, Pigdon and Marilyn	Just a little walk*
	Un Paseo*
	Summer Storm*
	Una Tormenta de Verano*
	Camping*

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